

Council on Student Services (COSS)

Minutes of Meeting #6

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

1:00-2:30 p.m.

Teams Meeting

AGENDA

Voting Members

Present

- David Newman, Executive Director, Student Experience, Student Life St. George
- Beth Ali, Executive Director, Athletics & Physical Activity, Faculty of Kinesiology & Physical Education
- John Monahan, Warden, Hart House
- Melinda Scott, Director of the Office of the Vice Provost students
- Heather Kelly, Executive Director, Student Life Programs & Services, Student Life St. George
- Mark Overton, Dean of Student Affairs and Assistant Principal, Student Services, UTM
- Desmond Pouyat, Dean of Student Affairs, UTSC
- Dianna Acuna, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Jaime Kearns, Association of Part-Time Undergraduate Students (APUS)
- Dermot O'Halloran, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Dhanela Sivaparanr, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Tyler Riches, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Muntaka Ahmed, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)
- Eesha Chaudhry, Council on Student Services (CSS)

Absent

- Lwanga Musisi, Graduate Students' Union (GSU)
- Lily Pan (VP External) Quality Service to Students (QSS)
- Paul Kaita, University of Toronto Students' Union (UTSU)

Nonvoting Members

- Jim Webster, Director of Finance, Faculty of Physical Education and Health
- Serena Persaud, CAO, Office of Student Life
- Sherry Kulman, Chief Administrative Officer at Hart House
- Fran Dobbin, Director, Family Programs & Services

Guests

- Michelle Brownrigg, (HH)
- Davina Chan (HH)
- Felicity Morgan (UTM)
- Julian Oliveira (OPIRG)
- Suzanne Macintyre (HH)
- Amy Interior (HH)

Chair

- Susan Froom

Secretary

- Kim Elias-Cartwright

Recording Secretary

- Kristin Radley-Jenkins

AGENDA ITEMS

1. Introductions

Chair welcomed the members and guests.

2. Meeting Called to Order

Chair called the meeting to order at 1:07.

3. Land Acknowledgement

The chair began the meeting with the Land Acknowledgement. Froom invites Dhanela Sivaparanr from GSU to read their land acknowledgement.

4. Approval of Agenda

Chair sought mover to approve agenda. Sivaparanr motioned, Riches seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

5. Approval of Minutes from Meeting #5: January 26, 2021

Chair sought mover to approve minutes. Ali motioned, Kearns seconded. All in favour, none opposed, no abstentions. The motion passed.

6. Recap of Hart House Budget and Q&A

Froom invites Monahan to recap his budget presentation.

Key Takeaways:

- Hart House continues to prioritize students first and foremost;
- 2021-22- will be a year of recovery and rebuilding for Hart House;
- Hart House is requesting a student fee increase of 1.95%

7. Recap of Sport & Rec Budget and Q&A

Froom invites Ali to recap her budget presentation.

Froom requested some clarification, given that the budget being proposed actually reduces the fees for the students if KPE can explain how that would then affect the fees going forward, noting the distinction between the UTI and CPI drop off that happens if the students do not approve a budget versus if it stays permanent if the students do approve the budget.

Webster responded that if the budget is not approved, the higher of the two will become a temporary fee so in this case it would be the CPI that becomes the temporary fee of 2%, and the minus from the from the UTI would become the permanent. So, Sports & Rec's base in three years would go down slightly.

Newman added that if the budget doesn't pass at the vote, the formula will still apply and there's still a UTI that exists in the new formula. It's just lower than last year's amount.

8. Recap of Student Life Budget and Q&A

Froom invited Newman to recap his budget presentation.

Newman provided a recap and overview of the Student Life budget and fee increase requests for both the Health and Counselling Fee and the Student Services Fee. Newman added that through the recommendations from the Task Force on Student Mental Health, and through the support from the Provost office, they will be looking at an expansion in the Koffler Student Services Center to create more spaces for Health and Wellness. Newman noted that this has been one of their challenges for a number of years and when they look back there has been no upgrades to the space and no expansion of the space in 40 years. This is a really critical step in the right direction for Student Life.

Froom asked for clarification on the two parts of the budget. Health & Counseling and the Student Services, and will there be two separate votes for these. Newman confirmed that yes, they both require a separate vote.

9. Open Questions and Answers

Froom opens the discussion up for general questions and answers.

Riches wanted to thank each division for all their work on there budgets. He also thanked each division for their work over the course of COVID-19 to adopt services and operation and still able to achieve a great level of service to students. Riches continued stating he has mentioned before and to other bodies that it is difficult to consider fee increases during COVID-19. This is because of the economic impacts, however, it also has been made apparent that the budgets are designed to help the divisions stay afloat, financially and to begin to recover from COVID-19. Going forward a lot of it is balanced

budget, staff compensation increases, for example at Hart House for putting funds away to the operating reserve. He also recognizes the alternative to this would either be staff reductions or service reductions, neither of which are ideal.

Riches wanted some clarity on what the outcomes of each of the fee changes. If one fails what happens or if one passes what happens.

Ali commented that when they begin the process of the budget presentations, they do them together and they integrated each budget, and that has taken on its own merit. Sports & Rec, Hart House & Student Life will put a motion forward for their individual budgets to be passed, and Newman will put two motions forward.

Newman noted that a positive vote gives each Division more stability because it means a permanent increase, which allows for better planning, because of the unknown three years from now. The other piece Newman mentioned was that it gives a stronger mandate to UAB on advice that is provided through the council, which gives a strong message of support.

Monahan began by saying that he respects, particularly this year the students have a lot to think about before the vote. There is a lot of accountability that the student leadership has on them and many people that are looking to them to make a good decision. Monahan does recognize the pressure and responsibility, and that nobody at the COSS table takes that lightly. There is lots of respect that these are complex decisions in complex structures Monahan recently shared an interesting perspective from the University's Chief Financial Officer, who recommended a moderate approach in fee changes.

10. Other Business

Froom wanted to continue with the discussion of last meeting on the relocation of OPRIG and Centre for Women and Trans People.

Scott provided further background adding that OVPS had direct communication with OPIRG and the Centre for Women and Trans People by email offering direct meetings that would involve all of the stakeholders including the project managers for the construction, as well as representative from the Faculty of Arts and Science. Due to delays in the Student Commons project, in the interim they have offered the two groups storage of their belongings in Student Commons as well as some temporary office space in Sidney Smith Hall. Scott noted they understand the process of moving can be very disruptive, so have offered a moving company to help and open to anything else they may need for a smooth transition.

Dermot reiterated that UTSU has half occupancy of Student Commons at this point and are waiting for full occupancy. Dermot noted they are very close, but recognized that this is also an issue with contractors, and the University being able to access the space.

Dermot mentioned that they have been working very closely with their partners and able to offer solutions.

Ahmed noted they are committed to helping OPIRG and the Centre for Women and Trans people to get in as safely as possible. Ahmed mentioned she is in collaboration with the University and the goal is to make sure their services are able to function and the contingency is also there to facilitate any sort of logistical funding support. Ahmed echoed what Dermot outlined, and at this point just waiting on the logistics.

Kearns wanted to clarify that a few things were taken into consideration before they move into the Sid Smith building, for example wheelchair access, and gender-neutral washrooms.

Scott responded in terms of temporary space at Arts and Science, and that they are very open to working with OPIRG and The Centre for Women and Trans People space to ensure that the space meets their needs. They have offered for a tour of the space to make sure they can have a seamless transition.

Dermot responded on behalf of Student Commons and noted that everything they need should be accounted for, and if there was anything further they would continue to have conversations around it. Dermot continued stating the primary issue at this point is the temporary space and the timeline to move.

Froom noted we will have one more meeting after the COSS vote meeting on February 16, which needs to be scheduled. This meeting will be to elect the UTSU chair for COSS next year.

11. Adjournment

Froom asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Riches motioned to adjourn. Overton seconded, all in favour. Meeting was adjourned at 2:23pm.